

Trade Act Assistance Program



WHAT IS TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)?

The federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Reform Act of 2002 consolidated the Trade Act of 1974 and the Transitional Adjustment Assistance program under the 1994 North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA).

TAA provides a variety of services and benefits to workers who lose their jobs because of increased imports or when their employer shifts production to certain countries outside the U.S. The program is administered by the Idaho Department of Labor through their 24 Job Service offices statewide.

ELIGIBILITY

- Workers who lose their jobs or whose work has become part-time because of increased imports or because their employer shifts production from a site within the United States to certain countries may be eligible.
- Workers in companies indirectly affected by trade may also be eligible for TAA. If a worker loses a job at a company that produces and supplies component parts directly to a certified primary firm, that worker may be eligible.
- Indirectly affected workers may also be eligible if they work for a firm that adds value to a product, or does final assembly or finishing work for a certified primary firm.
- Family farmers and farm workers who are adversely affected by NAFTA, but who do not qualify for unemployment compensation, are eligible for TAA if they worked at least eight weeks during the previous year.

Check with a local Job Service representative for additional eligibility information.

SERVICES & BENEFITS

• *Training and Reemployment Services*

Job Service offers reemployment assistance to workers, including job referral, job search assistance, job seeking skills training, resume assistance, and career guidance. When no suitable jobs are available and skill training is needed for reemployment, Job Service can connect workers with available training services at no cost. If the training facility is located outside the normal commuting area, some transportation costs are paid through TAA.

• *Job Search Assistance*

Job Search allowances may be available to cover expenses incurred when seeking employment outside normal commuting areas (paid at 90 percent of the allowable costs up to the maximum amounts allowable).

• *Relocation Assistance*

Relocation allowances may be available to workers who find a job outside their normal commuting area and must move as a condition of accepting that employment. TAA will pay 90 percent of the allowable costs of moving family and household furnishings to a new location. In addition, relocated workers are eligible to receive a lump sum payment up to the maximum amounts allowable to help with the expenses of relocating. The amount of the lump sum payment varies by program and by the amount of wages the worker earned at the adversely affected employment.

There are time limits for filing applications for job search and relocation allowances. Only travel in the United States is authorized. Applications must be filed before the job search or relocation begins.

- ***Weekly monetary benefits when state unemployment benefits are exhausted***

TAA certified workers may be eligible for weekly Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) after their regular state unemployment insurance (UI) benefits have been exhausted. If the worker is enrolled in training, weekly TRA benefits are paid during training periods if the worker continues to attend sessions and make satisfactory progress.

- ***Health Insurance Tax Credit***

The worker may be eligible for a tax credit of 65 percent of the cost of health coverage for eligible individuals and qualified family members. Specific eligibility criteria must be met for the worker to qualify for this benefit.

HOW TO PETITION FOR TAA

A group of three workers, their authorized representative, One-Stop operators or partners, or the Idaho Department of Labor may file a TAA petition for TAA certification. The petition must be filed simultaneously with the Idaho Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). Petitions are available at any Idaho Job Service office.

Before certifying a petition, the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance at the USDOL must determine if increased imports contributed to a company's decreased sales and production. It must decide if a significant number of workers have been laid off or if there is a strong indication that layoffs will occur. Approved certifications carry an impact date and generally are valid for two years from the date issued. If the petition is certified as eligible, affected workers may then apply for TAA services. If the petition is denied, affected petitioners may appeal that determination.

IF A PETITION IS DENIED

Petitioners are notified in writing if their petition for TAA was denied. Those determinations, which must also be published in the Federal Register, can be appealed in writing through the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance.

OLDER WORKER ALTERNATIVE

Workers over age 50 who were employed by a company that is eligible for coverage under the Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) program may choose to receive services under this program rather than the regular TAA program. Ask your Job Service representative if your former employer was certified for this program and if you are eligible for the ATAA benefits.

For more information, please contact your local Job Service office, or call:

Idaho Department of Labor, Unemployment Insurance Division

317 W. Main St. Boise, ID 83735-0590

Phone (208) 332-3577, Fax (208) 334-6400

www.idahoworks.org